

INTERESTING AND IMPORTANT CORRESPONDENCE

BETWEEN

OPPOSITION MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE OF VIRGINIA

AND

HON. JOHN MINOR BOTTS,

JANUARY 17, 1860.

RICHMOND, 14th Jan., 1860.

DEAR SIR:—We have witnessed with concern and apprehension, the manifestations of a design in this State to prepare the hearts and hands of our people for disunion and civil war.

The late atrocious incursion of John Brown and his band of miscreants upon Harper's Ferry, furnishes a natural pretext and encouragement for this design. It is, also, assisted by the dissensions and disorganization of Congress, and the evidences of unfriendly feeling among the people and the unconstitutional acts of the Legislatures of the free States.

We are gratified to find from our interchange of opinion with you, that while in common with ourselves you do not underrate those grave causes of disaffection between the North and the South, you are not disposed to exaggerate them, but have held your mind in a state of calm equipoise, so as to be able to do justice to the important events that have transpired, and to the parties to these sectional disputes.

We may also say that it is due to the party, to which we belong, to demonstrate that the country has been brought to its present lamentable condition, not only without any agency on its part, but in spite of its warnings, its principles, and its policy.

It seems to us, that in times like these, fraught with danger to the peace and safety of our people, they are entitled to the views and counsel of those whose voices they are accustomed to hear with confidence and respect. Among such

we gladly recognize yourself—no fear of reproach, no calculation of expediency, no courting of popular favor has ever restrained you from the fearless expression of your opinions; and it is encouraging to you and your friends to know how generous opponents have come at last to acknowledge publicly their approval of your course and opinions, which they had once most loudly condemned.

We, therefore, respectfully ask you to communicate to us freely and fully your views upon the various questions and events that now agitate and distract the public mind, so that they may be published to the country, and receive that favorable consideration to which they are entitled from their intrinsic merit and your character for independence, ability, sagacity, integrity, and truth.

With assurances of our most friendly and respectful consideration, we remain, most truly,

Yours, &c.,

J. K. MARSHALL,	JNO. A. CARTER,
WMS. C. WICKHAM,	GEO. TOWNES,
WM. W. CARRAWAY, Jr.,	WM. N. MCKENNEY,
ALEX. RIVES,	<i>Of the Senate</i>

JOS. SEGAR,	H. B. MAUPIN,
A. S. BOREMAN,	A. J. WATTS,
LEWIS MCKENZIE,	D. FROST,
J. A. ALDERSON,	E. M. BENTLEY,
D. T. BABBLE,	A. WATSON,
N. RICHARDSON,	Z. L. MAGRUDER,
WM. J. DICKINSON,	J. G. MARTIN,
H. W. HOLEWAY,	<i>Of the House of Delegates</i>

To Hon. JOHN M. BOTTS.

LETTER OF MR. BOTTS.

RICHMOND, January 17, 1860.

GENTLEMEN: Your highly flattering letter of the 14th was duly received. Applications have been made from a great number of private sources for my general views on the condition of the country, and of the results to which, in its present distempered state, it was likely to lead. Hitherto I have foreborne to take any part in the various schemes and public meetings that many worthy and conservative men of our own party have felt it to be their duty to unite in promoting, because I did not wish to lend my name or countenance to anything, that in my judgment, was calculated either to increase or keep alive a state of excitement in the public mind, the necessity for which, from first to last, I have not been able to realize; at the same time, I have had no disposition to obtrude my private reflections and conclusions on the consideration of others, who looked upon the events of the last ninety days in a light which I was not able to bring my mind to believe was one altogether of calm and dispassionate consideration. For these reasons I have been not only inactive, but silent, as far as the public was concerned; but when I find myself called upon by so large and respectable a body of gentlemen, who themselves represent a large portion of the intelligence and conservatism of the State, no alternative is left me, and I am constrained to comply with the request preferred; though I have reason to fear, from the general tone of the public press, as well as from the proceedings of public meetings, that my opinions will be found in striking contrast with those of my fellow-citizens generally. Whether they or I have come to the most correct conclusions, it will not require much time to determine, and to that great arbiter of truth I am willing to defer for the ultimate result; but for the passing moment, I fear my opinions are of rather too conservative an order; but for all that, I cannot, and I will not, play the hypocrite, and pretend to see what I do not see, nor affect to feel what I do not feel.

Without regard, then, to the order in which your subjects for consideration are presented, I will proceed to lay before you the reflections that have passed through my mind, and the impressions they have left.

I do not wish to judge harshly, or do any man injustice; I am willing to hear before I strike; but it is undoubtedly true that a condition of things has been brought about in this State, and which has been extended greatly beyond its limits, for which, if any sufficient reason has existed, I have not been able to discover or comprehend it.

That a bold, daring, reckless outlaw, a monomaniac on the subject of slavery, but none the less dangerous and culpable on that account, who had been taught to believe by the dominant party of this State, that he had sympathizers, aiders and abettors throughout the Commonwealth, among whom, you and I, and *all* in opposition to their general policy, and especially every man of mark in our party, were numbered, did un-

dertake with the aid of some fifteen or twenty others, white and colored, to incite a servile insurrection at and about Harper's Ferry; in the attempted execution of which they were guilty of the highest offences known to our laws, has now become a matter of history as well as of fact; that this lawless band of desperate and misguided men deserved the punishment they have met with, and that they courted and provoked, no right minded man can doubt; but that any respectable portion of my fellow-countrymen had any knowledge of, or had participated, directly or indirectly, in this hell-born scheme of violence, *I have not, I cannot, and I will not believe*, and especially upon the simple conjecture of others, or anonymous communications, which would be insufficient to convict a free negro or slave of robbing a hen-roost, before any magistrate in the State, who knew his duty, and was disposed to pursue it; for not one man, of good or bad character, has yet testified or made a declaration of a single fact, coming within his own knowledge, which we have been permitted to see or to know, implicating any others than those who were actually engaged in the enterprise.

And yet the effort has been made, and my blood runs cold, and I shudder when I say, *successfully made*, to a great extent, to create the belief that a great and powerful party, numbering in its ranks, more by hundreds of thousands, perhaps, than any other one party in the country, knew and approved of, and participated indirectly in the crimes and outrages perpetrated, and that they sympathized with the convicted felons by whom they were committed, when they paid the penalty of their guilt. Great God! what an idea to take possession of the minds of men heretofore considerate, reflecting, and conservative.

If I believed this to be true, I would no sooner consent to live in connection with, and as a part of, the same political community with them, if I could find the means of avoiding it, than I would continue to inhabit a house that was in flames from the basement to the roof.

If it shall be shown that Mr. Seward, the chief leader of that party, had a fore knowledge of John Brown's purpose as attempted at Harper's Ferry, and locked the secret in his breast, when he went abroad, as many profess to believe, I do not hesitate to say, that there is no punishment known to our laws that would surpass, if it could be commensurate with his guilt; but as I am opposed to all mob and lynch law, which punishes without trial, and often without cause, so will I not condemn to such infamy, without affording him an opportunity for a fair hearing, *any*, though he were the humblest and most lowly in the land.

That there is a body of desperate and despicable Abolitionists at the North, who have expressed their sympathy for these violators of all law, human and divine, is at once admitted; and for thirty years past, they have preached the same nefarious doctrines that they hold now. But does that any more involve the general population of the North, that should render it necessary

for them to purge themselves of all complicity in this affair than that the open, bold, and treasonable declarations of another set of fanatics in the South, who are eternally sounding their obnoxious and silly threats of disunion in our ears, in the event of this contingency to-day, and that to-morrow, and for something else the day after, should create the necessity for us to acquit ourselves before the public of all participation in their guilty and treasonable schemes? I adopt and act upon the principle that is everywhere recognized by law, that all men are innocent of great crimes until guilt is proved, and as I am not willing to be held responsible for the crimes of those who clamor for disunion upon every idle pretext, because I do not feel it necessary to get up in public meetings and purge myself of their guilt, so I do not propose to hold those at the North responsible for any high crimes of which no evidence has been furnished against them specifically.

But John Brown and his confederates have all been punished. Would to God it had stopped there! And why should it not? Suppose these men had been all from the body of our own State, or adjoining southern States, what then would have been the result? Why, they would have been hung—exactly as Nat Turner and his confederates were hung, and there it would have ended. But because these men were from the free States, in the absence of all requisite proof that their scheme was known to a dozen men, beyond those engaged in the outrage, all nature has been convulsed, and the Union itself, in the opinion of many heretofore conservative men, is no longer to be tolerated, or borne with. I am no defender of any sectional organization, sectional man, or sectional sentiment. I ask, and claim, what the Constitution grants to each and all sections; nothing more and nothing less. But if Brown was a Republican, Cook and four others of his officers, out of nine, were Democrats, as shown by their own records; why, then, was not the Northern Democracy as responsible for their misconduct as the Republicans? And yet I would as soon hold my hand in the flames until it was burned to a cinder, as I would be guilty of the baseness of charging on the Northern Democracy complicity in the designs of these wicked men.

But to make it appear that there was Republican complicity, the people of this State were led to believe that large bodies of men in Pennsylvania, Ohio—even in New York, Boston, and elsewhere—were armed and banded together for the purpose of making a hostile invasion into Virginia, for the purpose of resisting the execution of our laws, and of rescuing Brown and his followers from punishment. I will not say this was not so, because I will not say what I do not know to be true; but I will say, and I do say, that no evidence worthy of consideration has yet been laid before the public, to justify the belief that there was anywhere, at any time, a combination of 1,000—100—or 10 men formed or proposed to be formed, for any such purpose. That sensitive and excited imaginations were operated upon, either by anonymous and mischievous correspondents, wholly insufficient for the importance attached to them, or by secret disclosures not yet made public, or that there was some ul-

terior object in view, there can be no question. That old Brown and his party were kept as a thirty days wonder, and at last lionized, heroized, martyred and canonized, with a display of "all the pomp, pride, and circumstance of war" that we have no warrant for believing, attended the crucifixion of the Saviour of the World, is not to be denied. That there has been an enormous public debt incurred, estimated, as I learn, from a quarter to half a million of dollars; that there have been marchings and counter-marchings; that dictatorial and despotic powers have been exercised; that large bodies of troops have been quartered on peaceable and unoffending citizens; that in a time of peace a standing army has been collected, without the consent of our Legislature; that martial law has been proclaimed and rigidly enforced; that the general channel of communication through telegraphic agency has been controlled; that trade and travel, by certain railroads, have been suspended and prohibited; and that quiet, peaceable, and unoffending citizens have been interrupted and put under guard, and, in some cases, imprisoned, are matters of fact with which all are familiar; and that the public mind should have jumped to the conclusion that such things could not be, unless some dreadful and overpowering calamity threatened the safety of the State, was quite natural; and that sufficient cause *did* exist for the exercise of these extraordinary and dangerous powers, is neither asserted nor denied. I only say that we have not, as yet, been favored with any data that has satisfied my mind that the occasion *did* exist. And, as a citizen of this Commonwealth, mindful of my own rights, and the rights of others, before I justify or approve what has been done, I claim to be further enlightened. It surely will not be disputed that very urgent necessity should be shown to have existed, to justify the exercise of these high prerogatives of Imperial power, which were, I believe, never resorted to by the Father of his Country throughout the progress of the Revolution, notwithstanding the country was then filled with those unfriendly to our arms, who sympathized profoundly with the mother country.

One thing *I do know*: whether designed or not, it has exasperated and phrenzied the public mind—it has begotten an ill-feeling, antipathy, and hostility between members of the same political community, that every good man and patriot must deprecate, and that it becomes the administrators of the law and the representatives of the people to do all in their power to soothe down and rectify. It has had the effect, whether contemplated or not, of occasioning infinite confusion in the ranks of one of the political parties of this State, and of temporarily, at least, raising the drooping hopes of another; it has had the effect of breaking off all probable co-operation, (for the present, at least,) between the North and South, without which it has been hoped an easy path to victory would be left open, to that party in whose hands and under whose legislation and control the present unhappy condition of things has been effected.

That all this has been providential or accidental, it would, perhaps, be uncharitable to doubt, if it were not that the time has arrived when it was indispensable to their success, that something

should turn up that would throw the whole South into a fever on the question of slavery. Periodically every four years, for the last twenty, and always *happening* to be in that year in which a Presidential election is to take place, something has occurred, either providentially, or by accident, or by management, to impress the public mind with the conviction that the institution of slavery was in danger, and that the great national Democratic party was the only one to be relied on for its security. Under these circumstances, whatever may be the general readiness of our people to rely with confidence upon the necessity for all the revulsion and convulsion of public sentiment, which it has been painful to witness, those of us who have become habituated to such occurrences, and have passed the hey-day of youth, and are, therefore, of less excitable temperaments, may be excused for looking, if not distrustfully, at least with some degree of caution, before we *leap blindfold* into the pitfall, that, in every "*leap year*" is dug for unwary and unsuspecting youth, as well as for timid and wavering gray beards who happen not to deify that party to whose advantage it always results.

The first occasion for ordering out the troops from a distance from Charlestown, I think, was founded on a telegraphic dispatch from the officer in command at Charlestown (as reported in the papers) that 250 men were encamped near Berryville ford, in Clarke county, which, geographically, is nearly in a direct line from this city to Charlestown, so that they must have passed by, or around Charlestown, and have gotten in the rear, but more into the heart of the State—which was so improbable as that, the wonder was, that any one could have been imposed upon by it; at all events, an hour's ride of a messenger would have determined the fact—yet troops were telegraphed for, and some 500 immediately despatched in hot haste for the bloody field—when the troops arrived, it had been ascertained that there had been a broomstick fight between some old women and a few men who went to search the house formerly occupied by Underwood, who was driven from the State in 1856; so the several companies of volunteers wheeled to the right about and came home again. I think there was nothing in that exploit to justify excitement or alarm; yet it did so to a very large extent. By the time the companies reached Richmond, another alarming telegraph was received that somebody's barn or straw stack had been set on fire—the troops were ordered back, and the howitzers, I think it was, that arrived here on one day, returned the day after. Then came a third report that a large body of men were crossing the river at Wheeling, on their march to Charlestown to rescue Brown; a simple inquiry by telegraph to the authorities at Wheeling would have shown that it was an unfounded rumor, which was ascertained by telegraph before the troops had gotten thirty miles from Richmond; and a dispatch here and there, for a few emissaries or detectives sent to the suspected places at the cost of \$100, would have dissipated all apprehensions—but if the report had been true, they were not within fifteen days march of Charlestown, and had to travel through a well-settled portion of the country, occupied by true, patriotic, and loyal men, through which they could never have

passed alive; but, about seven o'clock at night, the alarm bells were sounded, a midnight march was ordered, the city was drained of its volunteers, men torn from their wives, daughters, mothers, and sisters, without preparation of any sort, leaving their families and their business in an unprotected state; and when they arrived at the Relay House, on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, where they were detained for awhile, it was reported by the letter writers of the press that, on being asked if he thought there was really any purpose of an attempted rescue, the Commander-in-Chief replied, "No! he did not, but he thought it a good opportunity to drill his boys, and show the North with what readiness troops could be raised in Virginia, for the defence of the State." In a letter now before me, dated Harper's Ferry, Nov. 23, the writer says: "In reply to a gentleman who asked him, this morning, if he had any fears of a rescue, he (the Governor) answered, 'he never had the least, but considered it the finest opportunity that had ever offered to put the State in military training.' He added, 'I can now teach my boys how to carry biscuit in their knapsacks, and to arrange bullets in their cartridge boxes.'" Well, then, if this was all the "*boys*" were called into service for, and it has been confirmed by the fact that no mortal eye has ever yet rested on the enemy they were called out to repel—as far as we know, why shall I not stand excused in the public judgment for not having felt alarmed, excited or disturbed.

The poet sings of

"Old ocean in wild tempest tossed,
To waft a feather or to drown a fly."

and I have often heard of "*a tempest in a tea-pot,*" but what is one to think of a *hurricane in a teaspoon*, that has stirred up the deep foundations of society, and lured men on to their own destruction and the ruin of their country? I beg to be excused for not participating in such excitement.

I do not say, that to make political capital was the object, or sole object, of what a very large number believe to have been, the unfounded apprehension that was created, notwithstanding the dilemma to which the Democracy were reduced for some new issue on slavery, while many of them admitted that this whole affair was a "*Godsend*" to their party; but what I do say is, that if that had been the sole object, the most efficient means were adopted to accomplish the end in view, temporarily at least; whether it will last long enough to result in forwarding the views of any great political party in the country, will depend very much, I presume, on the facts that may be disclosed by the investigating committees of our Legislature, and of the Senate of the United States; but we must have the facts and the names of parties, and not mere speculation and assertion. But, every thing said or done, or that was left unsaid or undone, at the North, has been exaggerated, magnified and distorted, by a portion of the public press, and by designing men at the South; whilst every indiscreet, intemperate and foolish thing, said or done by a highly excited people at the South, has in turn been paraded before the people of the North, with a view of extorting, in retaliation, every species of menace and denunciation, and of keeping the North united, until the general, but careless reader

would have become impressed with the belief, that a state of things had arisen, that could only be terminated by the most disastrous civil strife.

The New York Herald and New York Tribune, both of which I take, and read every day, have for the last ninety days been loaded down with the most inflammatory matter; one is intended to operate on the southern mind, for what useful purpose I have not seen, and the other upon the North, for a purpose that is manifest—but between the two, they have furnished an abundant supply of fuel to keep the most extensive political furnace at its utmost capacity of heat.

That there are good and bad men in all countries, in all sections, in all communities, in all parties, and in all churches even, every one must admit—and that one depraved and wicked person can set a whole neighborhood in an uproar, and disturb the general peace of society, the occurrences of every day life have taught us all; that a few such men can effect similar mischief on a larger scale, every one must know—and when a large body of misguided and designing politicians at either end of the Union, have brought their minds to the conclusion that their only hope for whatever designs they might have in view, rested upon the amount of inflammatory excitement, that could be raised among their respective friends, sympathizers, and followers—and they set their heads to work, to find fault with everything, and criminate everybody, in the opposite section, and they in turn send back their indiscriminate denunciations and recriminations, and the ball is thus kept bandied backwards and forwards, with increased impetus at every blow; is it to be wondered at, that sooner or later, a spirit of misunderstanding, disaffection, hostility, and menace, should spring up among the idle lookers-on, which may finally extend itself to the whole community? These two parties, the Disunionists of the South, and the Abolitionists of the North, constitute the "Capulets" and the "Montagues" of our nation, by keeping all the rest in a constant state of commotion; and "*a plague on both their houses, say I.*" If the good men of the country, those who are satisfied to live in the Union as it was formed by our fathers, and upon the same terms and conditions that they lived, would only step forward, and take the control in their own hands, just for one year only, if they did not like it longer—and crush both these miserable factions into atoms, as they have the power to do, and then to keep them crushed, as there would be no serious difficulty in doing—they would accomplish an object that would be secondary in importance only to the work of their ancestors, in establishing the only resting place for the genius of Liberty on the wide expanded globe.

We have become very much a nation of hunters after office and of spoils. This is the case, at least, with those who make all the mischief for the rest. Let those who are satisfied with the Union as it is, elect a President and a Congress who will hold every abolitionist and disunionist in the land, or who is tainted with the spirit of either, and all who manifest a disposition to agitate the only question that produces discord in our otherwise happily cemented family, be regarded and treated as enemies to their country and their birthright, and it will be found

that the patronage and influence of the government with its \$80,000,000 of annual expenditure, or whatever other sum to which it may be reduced, will be quite sufficient in a few years to cure the evil, which will become small by degrees, and beautifully less, year after year, until it will disappear altogether. Let all *offices, patronage, and influence*, be withheld from them, and disunionists or abolitionists, would soon become so useless, worthless, and contemptible in their influence at the polls, that they would no longer be courted and caressed; and, if they secretly cherished such damaging doctrines as are now publicly boasted of in their respective localities, they would no sooner proclaim them aloud, than they would make a public confession of their infidelity to the religion of their Saviour. *Money, Place and Power*, is what the mischief-makers *make mischief for*; deprive them of these, by a corrected public spirit, and a combined public effort, and the government, which is now a disgrace to the age in which we live, will be restored to harmony, dignity, and efficiency.

In a personal and private sense, there are good men of all parties in Congress—Democrats, Whigs, Americans, and Republicans—but how many of them are there, who would utter a threat of dissolution—for which they have been clothed with no more power than you or I, and how many would make a speech on slavery, if they felt assured that it would be attended with their dismissal from the public service? I do not say that there is no district in the United States from which one or the other or both might not at first be returned to Congress, but such influence on the part of the Government as I have mentioned, added to the exertions of the conservative men of each district whose interests are suffering, and whose patience is well nigh exhausted, would soon root them out, and force them into a different course of action; for then their influence would not be felt and courted at the polls, for this it is, that gives them all the consequence they possess.

But, what has occurred to justify this clamor for dissolution, and general preparation for civil war? I subscribe for, receive, and read, fifty-two papers a week, besides a large lot of others that are sent me, or that I meet with elsewhere; there cannot, therefore, be very much of importance afloat, that I do not have a fair opportunity to see, or hear of, and yet, I am wholly uninformed of any necessity, or reason for the one or the other. Indeed, I have seen no reason for alarm, or uneasiness at anything that has occurred. I pray that it may all be examined, with a close and scrutinizing eye, with a calmness and deliberation worthy of the great interests involved, that we may see what it amounts to, before we light up this torch of civil war; for any fool may set fire to a temple, whilst the entire population may be unable to extinguish the flames.

Is it then, because old Brown, with his handful of free negroes and deluded followers, made an unsuccessful attempt to get up a servile insurrection, for which he and they have all suffered death in some form or other, except the two now in custody? I suppose not, for that matter is at an end, and they have passed from the scene of

their mischief and their wickedness; and I presume no-body is afraid of them now, whatever may have been the consternation they occasioned among the women and children when alive.

Is any one apprehensive that such an attempt, or one on a larger scale, is likely to be made hereafter, by any now living, and who have witnessed the result of their miserable failure? and when they have seen what an immense force could be collected together any day or night, for the protection of our people, and defence of our territory, when no occasion existed for it? Never a bit, will they encounter such odds again.

It surely is not to prevent a rescue now; for there are none left to be rescued, but two, and they attract no attention. What then is it? We are told that a certain set of religious enthusiasts and fanatical abolitionists, continue in the vocation they have followed for the last thirty years, and persist in preaching against slavery, and that those who hear them preach don't rise and discountenance, condemn, and denounce it; so far from it, they actually, in many instances, profess to feel a sympathy for Brown. Well, then, we are going to disserve this great Empire, and arm the State against sympathy, are we!

Why, I see nothing remarkable in the fact that sympathy should have been expressed for a man, who had been represented to them, and by high authority too, as a "hero" and "a bundle of nerves," as "an honest, sincere, and truthful man," and if, instead of looking upon him as I do, as a wild, visionary, dangerous murderer, and outlaw, who came where he had no business to come, to execute what he had no right to interfere with, I could have been led to believe, he was a "hero" and "an honest, sincere, and truthful man," I would have sympathized with him also, and I would have proclaimed it aloud to all the world.

Now it seems to me, that "sympathy" for Brown, or want of "sympathy" for us, might constitute a sufficient reason for breaking off social intercourse between the sympathisers and the sufferers, if they were neighbors, but rather an inadequate cause for a dissolution of the Union, or for arming the State. But the mere expression of sympathy, on the part of Brown's friends, no more affects our rights of property, than the condemnation of that sympathy, on the part of others protects it. If the tenure of slavery were to be decided by this test, I think the want of sympathy would preponderate, and the property would be safe, and the State might be relieved of the tax of being placed in a condition of defence.

There is one other cause of complaint frequently alluded to, which I propose to examine and to state fairly, according to my understanding. Nearly three years ago, a man by the name of Helper, a native of North Carolina, published a book, entitled "*The Impending Crisis of the South*," which certainly contains a vast deal of most mischievous, atrocious, and villainous matter, addressed to the non-slaveholding portion of the southern population—but that book also contains extracts and quotations from the writings and speeches of many very eminent men in the South, on the subject of slavery—embracing such men as Gen. Washington, Mr. Jefferson, Mr. Madison, Mr. Monroe, Patrick Henry, and

George Mason, and, coming down to a later period, to Mr. Clay, Gov. Hammond, Gov. McDowell, Mr. Rives, Mr. Ritchie, Mr. Wise, Mr. C. J. Faulkner, Mr. W. B. Preston and others, which, from the time of its publication, to within the last few weeks, has had a very limited circulation, and scarcely any among the people, (the non-slaveholders of the South,) to whom it was addressed. The book also contains a large amount of statistics, taken from the census of 1850, and is a volume of 420 pages. Some year and a half or two years ago, it was proposed to publish a compendium of this work: what portion of it was intended for publication, and what to be left out, in this new form, I do not know; but a paper, recommending a subscription to this abridged copy of the book, was signed by some sixty-seven members of the last Congress. Whether they expected it to contain the objectionable and offensive matter that is to be found in that volume, or whether it was only the extracts and the statistics referred to, I have had no means of forming an opinion, except so far as they have been expressed by several members on the floor of Congress, and from a few private letters I have received; but from these I have learned my impressions, and they are, that if the House shall ever be organized, there is not a man on that floor, who signed that recommendation, that will not purge and acquit himself of all purpose to endorse or recommend those offensive portions of the book that have been so freely spread broadcast over the entire country. If they do not, I shall be mistaken in my estimate of the qualities, both of head and heart of those men, and I shall be as ready to condemn them, as those who have preceded me in their denunciations. It may be asked, why have they not done it already? So far as my knowledge, or my opinion goes, it is because they happen to think it is not right to interrupt the organization of the House by such explanations. You and I may think otherwise; and if I were placed in such a position, and felt it to be a false one, no consideration of parliamentary usage should restrain me from seizing the first moment to extricate myself from all embarrassment and responsibility on the subject. But, then, we must remember that all men's minds are not constituted alike, or we should never disagree about anything. The course they have pursued, seems to have been laid down as a rule of party policy, and we know the effect such rules have upon us all.

But is the publication of a book, no matter what its character, or its endorsement by sixty-eight, or sixty-eight hundred, or sixty-eight thousand men, a sufficient reason for breaking up this Union? It may furnish a reason, if we had the power, for driving them out—but will it justify us in turning ourselves out? Why, if the Union is no longer desirable to us—if we don't desire any longer to avail ourselves of its advantages—if we prefer to adopt the suggestion of a prominent public writer in the *Examiner*, a short time since, to secede from the Union and call on Louis Napoleon to protect us, why then let us go, and make no more ado about it—*provided you will be allowed to go.*

If a man were a partner in a very extensive and wealthy concern to which his whole life had

been devoted, and in which the happiness, comfort, and security of his family were involved, would he ever think of running away from his house and home, of deserting his family, and abandoning the richest and choicest comforts of life, because some refractory member of the firm complained of the way in which his private affairs were conducted under his own roof? I certainly would not, and, therefore, don't choose to surrender all the blessings and advantages that I derive from this Union, in a civil, social, religious, and political aspect, because Mr. Helper or any other sixty-eight men alive are dissatisfied with the way I manage my domestic affairs in Virginia. When they come here to take control of my domestic concerns, or attempt a practical interference with them, it will be quite time enough for me to find a remedy—it is always at hand, and it is not necessary to arm the State against Mr. Helper, Mr. Helper's book, or any sixty-eight endorsers of that or any other book in print. The book will never hurt us half as much as it will Mr. Helper; for God helps us, when we can't help ourselves, against all the helpers of abolition and abolition books, so long, at least, as we have the Constitution and the laws of the country to call to our aid, to say nothing of four-fifths of the entire population of the North, who are a hard-working, industrious class of people, attending to their own private concerns, as the great body of the people of the South are doing, whilst the infatuated abolitionists there, and the infuriated disunionists here, are the only parties whose voices are heard above the active hum of busy industry.

It may not be either uninteresting or unstructive to review briefly the history of the past, as far as the slavery question is connected with the politics of the country; and here once for all I wish to say, that whenever I use the term "Democracy" I mean to apply it only to the leading politicians or *bossmen* of that party, who cut out the work for the masses to execute; occasionally it happens that a head journeyman is permitted to come into their councils, but the apprentices are never consulted, and they, at last, have more at stake, have more honesty, patriotism and good common sense than the men by whom they suffer themselves to be misled.

For the first twelve years after the formation of our Government, its administration was in the hands of the Father of his Country and John Adams, the elder. In the year 1800 a revolution in the politics of the country occurred, chiefly through the activity and energy of Aaron Burr, who was the legitimate father of Democracy, and not Mr. Jefferson, who was only the beneficiary of Burr's work, as all will admit who will read Parton's life of Burr; and whether the disunion portion of the Democratic party have inherited their treasonable principles from their distinguished progenitor, will be left for each one to determine for himself. The Washingtonian party were called Federalists, because they originally favored the adoption of the Constitution under which the present Federal Government was formed, and those unfriendly to the Constitution and to its adoption were then called Republicans and are now called Democrats. But, from the time of this revolution—which was inaugurated on the 4th of March, 1801—down to the 4th of

March, 1841, a period of forty years, the Republican or Democratic party held undisputed sway and almost unrestrained control over the destinies of the country, with the single interruption of four years, from 1825 to 1829—during which time it was in the hands of John Quincy Adams.

Those who recollect the violent and stormy passion exhibited at that day, at the loss of their long-enjoyed power, with the fierce and bitter denunciation and invective that characterized the opposition to the Administration of Mr. Adams, (which was one of the most able, conservative, prosperous, and economical that the country has ever enjoyed, from its earliest foundation,) and of those flagitious charges of "*bargain and corruption*" against one of the purest and most unselfish patriots (as all of every party now admit) that the nation has boasted since the days of Washington, together with the desperation and unscrupulous means resorted to for the recovery of power that marked the period referred to, will admit that nothing has since occurred that will serve as an analogy. The Democracy succeeded, and Gen. Jackson was inaugurated March, 1829; and then began the reign of terror—then commenced for the first time that universal system of proscription, under which devotion to Democracy and partisan services in elections were held to be the only passports to power, and the only tests of fitness for office, from the highest to the most humble in the Government; then the system was inaugurated by which every opponent to Democracy was to be annihilated, and every man's character was to be assailed and blackened who did not bow down and worship at the shrine of Jacksonism, which was another term for Democracy. And for eight years—aye, even long after his retirement from public life, a "*hurrah for Jackson*" was the only answer deemed necessary to the most potent arguments against the most lawless and unconstitutional acts of aggression and usurpation of power. During all this time the numerical strength of the country had been gradually but rapidly increasing in the North and diminishing in the South, and yet, for thirty-six years the southern Democracy had steadily persisted in putting none other than southern men in the Presidency. Under this state of things northern politicians were becoming restive. The policy of the North and the South essentially differed at this time on the subject of protection to domestic manufactures and the currency, and to counteract this increasing influence on the part of the North and the popularity of those questions, certain leading politicians, of whom Mr. Calhoun was at the head, felt the necessity of adopting some new device for the preservation and perpetuation of southern Democratic ascendancy—and that device was, to use the question of slavery as a great political engine by which the South was to be kept united, and by the divisions which the distribution of spoils and power among the northern Democrats would create, the power would be retained in the hands of Democracy, as they supposed, for long years to come; and the first scene in this new drama opened with a denial of the right of petition on the subject of slavery, which was the laying of the corner-stone of the foundation on which the present Abolition party has been erected. This was the first step

towards strengthening Democracy by uniting the South and dividing the North, and most fatally has it worked in the end. But, in the meantime, how many in the South have been enjoined or driven into their ranks by the eternal cry that slavery was in danger, and that the Democracy was the only national party that could save it, and from an apprehension that they might be regarded as disloyal to the South it would be difficult to enumerate.

Mr. Van Buren being the special pet of Gen. Jackson, the Democracy dared not oppose his will, and in 1836, for the first time, they yielded to the necessity of conferring the high distinction of a nomination on a "*northern man with southern principles*," and but for the shameful waste and extravagance, the enormous speculations and corrupt practices that prevailed, and were connived at, and rather rewarded than rebuked, during his Administration, the slavery question and its constant agitation might have prolonged their power to an indefinite period. But this it was that led to the policy of denouncing every man in the South as an Abolitionist, no matter what his interest in slave property—no matter what the evidence of his patriotism or fidelity to the Constitution—no matter what the extent of his services to the public, who did not bend the knee to the god of their idolatry, which was *brazen-faced Democracy*. And this policy, then established, it is, that has induced those who have no interest in the institution themselves, and who are in very many cases not likely to have such an interest at any future day, and who care nothing for it further than that it will contribute to the success of Democracy, to take upon themselves the prerogative of assuming the lead in its defence, over every slaveholder of the South, and of branding every man of mark or note opposed to their misrule as unfaithful to the South, and a sympathizer, an aider and abettor of the Abolition party, unworthy the confidence and support of a southern State.

In 1840, Gen. Harrison, an upright, honest, patriotic man, a native of Virginia, was nominated by the Whigs—he was at once branded throughout the State of his nativity and the South as an Abolitionist, whilst his competitor, Mr. Van Buren, was held up as a patron saint of the "peculiar institution"—but the charge against Gen. Harrison proved to be of no avail—the disreputable device failed to accomplish its end—the indignation of the country had been aroused against the Administration of Mr. Van Buren, and he was swept with the force of a tornado from power—this was the second time, that in 44 years the Democracy had been overthrown—they stood aghast and dismayed at the result; they felt that every hope was gone—the last and strongest card had been played and the game had been lost. In thirty days from his inauguration, Gen. Harrison suddenly died—and the estate fell to the heir apparent, the Vice President, a man whose vanity and ambition being readily approached, and easily excited, was in an incredibly short time won over to those who had but a few months before, been his bitterest revilers—and he turned his back on the friends who had elevated him to power and to fame. At once, the hopes of the Democracy revived. By an unlooked-for act of Providence

on the one hand, and an act of unparalleled treachery on the other, they found themselves again in possession of the government—but how to retain it was the point. Agitation of the slavery question must be kept up in some form, and they struck upon the expedient of annexing a foreign government to the United States—not for the purpose of extending and strengthening the institution of slavery—but of extending and strengthening the institution of Democracy, for in the late election Gen. Harrison had carried eight Southern States, and seventy-eight Southern electoral votes—which must be recovered or their power was gone forever. Slavery could not be strengthened by its extension into new territory, but Democracy might, by increasing the political power of the South, which was under the absolute control of Democracy. As an army of 100,000 men in a compact body is stronger and more capable of defending and protecting itself, than if divided into a hundred parts of 1,000 each—which may by an inferior force be cut up in detail, so is slavery when confined to the fifteen States in which it exists by the Constitution and local law of the States, far stronger, than if they were scattered over all the territory of the United States, when it too would be cut up in detail, and no vestige of it would be left in twenty years.

Upon this issue of the annexation of Texas, and the agitation of the question of slavery, they not only cheated Mr. Van Buren out of his nomination that the people desired, but they again succeeded in placing a *Southern Democrat* in the chair over Mr. Clay, another native son of Virginia, and a citizen of Kentucky, who was the owner of a large body of slaves—but who was nevertheless bitterly denounced as an abolitionist. So flushed were they with the unexpected victory they had achieved, over the foremost man of all the land, and so elated at the success of this new issue, that they were determined to press the matter of acquisition still further in time for the campaign of 1848—and utterly regardless of all precedent or constitutional restraint, they acquired and admitted Texas as one of the States of this Union by a joint resolution of Congress, which, as a mere act of ordinary legislation, is liable at any time to be repealed; for in law it was null and void from the beginning, for the reason, that the Constitution gave no power to the Legislature to enter into a contract with a foreign government for the purchase, sale, or surrender of its territory. In truth the power did not exist anywhere, but there was a precedent in the acquisition of Louisiana for acquiring territory by the *treaty-making power*—for which Mr. Jefferson subsequently suggested the propriety of an amendment of the Constitution. So that if that joint resolution should be repealed to-morrow, Texas would no longer legally be a member of this confederacy—although practically, it would have no effect on her *status* as a State. I only refer to this question to show to what extremities the Democracy resorted for slavery issues, to control Presidential elections.

But Texas answered the purposes of 1844; having dodged the *two-third vote* required for its admission by *treaty*, they were in hot haste to get up a new issue for the campaign of 1848—and they struck upon the expedient of having a

war with Mexico "to conquer a peace" and "for indemnity for the past, and security for the future," which would inevitably lead to the acquisition of additional territory, and necessarily to the question of the extension of slavery into it, which would as infallibly be resisted by the North, as it would be claimed and insisted on by the South. And this it was that led to the introduction of the Wilmot Proviso to be applied to any territory that might be acquired from Mexico; but they were quite as artful in dodging the war-making power as they had been before in dodging the treaty-making power, for they knew the war-making power could not be induced to make a declaration of war, for the reason that we had no cause of complaint against Mexico, while she had ground of complaint against us, for annexing a territory, the title to which she had never relinquished, but always claimed, and whose independence had been asserted only, but never fully established; so they managed through Mr. Polk, just elected, to send a fleet of observation to the coast of Mexico, and an army to Corpus Christi, which was acknowledged to be "*the most western point now (then) occupied by Texas,*" a distance of one hundred and eighty miles from the Rio Grande—all of which intermediate territory was then acknowledged by the President, Secretary of War, and our Minister to Mexico, Mr. Donaldson, to belong to Mexico. After waiting at Corpus Christi long enough to see that Mexico did not mean to make war upon us, this little army was marched across to the banks of the Rio Grande, a fort erected, and our guns were pointed upon the Mexican town of Matamoras; and thus was the war commenced, without the authority or knowledge of the war-making power, to prepare the way for the slavery issue in the campaign of 1848.

Mr. Clay having been defeated by Mr. Polk in '44, he was regarded as "*hors du combat*" for the succession, whilst Gen. Scott was generally looked upon as the most probable candidate of the Opposition; the position he held in the army entitled him to the command, but he was called into service, under such circumstances as led him to remark before leaving home, that he went leaving "*a fire in the rear, more formidable than the fire in front,*" for he knew he was sent to Mexico to be sacrificed. With less than ten thousand men under his command, with insufficient supplies of everything necessary to carry on the war, he was required to prosecute the war "*into the vitals of Mexico.*" He bombarded Vera Cruz and took possession of the city and the fort; he marched on to Cerro Gordo where he achieved a victory that crowned his own brow with additional laurels, and the American flag, and the prowess of our arms with new lustre.

This was more than they had bargained for—and it is mortifying to say, more than they desired; he was reaping laurels rather too fast and too plentifully—to conquer Mexico with such a force, and march into the capital containing a population of 250,000, would be likely to arouse a spirit of enthusiasm that might sweep everything, the Presidency, included, before him. Mexico wanted a commander, and General Santa Anna, who was not then in Mexico, was granted a private pass from our own Government to enter Mexico, and secret orders were sent down to our

Gulf fleet to permit him to pass that he might take command of the Mexican army; and the decree went forth that Scott must be crippled, and if not crippled, superseded in his command—it would never do to let these villainous Whigs reap any advantage from a war that had been made by themselves, for their own exclusive benefit, and in the midst of his successful career, it was solemnly proposed to appoint Colonel Benton, Lieutenant General, to go down to Mexico to take command of General Scott, (acknowledged as the first military man of the age,) and of his glorious little army. The indignation of the country was at once aroused, and the disreputable attempt to disgrace a victorious chief was defeated. Still they were not content. Scott must be in some manner shorn of the reputation he was acquiring; Democracy was endangered by it. So they hit upon the novel expedient of appointing four Democratic Brigadier Generals, three of whom, at least, had never seen any service, or as far as the country knew, had ever held a commission or drawn a sword from its scabbard, or attended a country muster, or shouldered an arm more formidable than an umbrella or a corn-stalk—these civil military gentlemen, (Colonel Butler had been an aid to General Jackson,) following the profession of the law, were sent down to watch Scott, and report to headquarters at Washington, anything that in their judgment might tend to his disparagement. But although surrounded with all these obstructions, difficulties, and impediments, ON, ON, he marched, from point to point, from city to city, from fort to fort, "*conquering and to conquer,*" until at last he entered the capital of Mexico at the head of his gallant little band of men, and planted the flag of the United States in the halls of the Montezumas, when to the eternal disgrace of all who were concerned, whilst standing at the head of his elated and victorious troops, he was suspended from command, which was transferred to one of the recently appointed Democratic generals, and he, Scott, the soldier, the warrior, the hero of his country, was brought home under arrest, upon charges so frivolous and contemptible, preferred by an inferior officer, (against whom he had preferred charges that were disregarded,) that they were not prosecuted, although he claimed and demanded a trial.

Never was there a more disgraceful occurrence to be recorded on the page of history for so ignoble an end. And I thank God that his countrymen have rebuked the conduct of his oppressors, and wiped out the stain attempted to be affixed to his illustrious name—his party, powerless to elect, subsequently gave him a nomination for the Presidency and cast for him 1,385,000 votes at the polls; and failing in their purpose to make him President, have since demanded and secured to him a military rank and title, never conferred on any other than the venerable Washington; the stain—no, not the stain, but the wrong and injustice of his oppressors have been wiped out, and in his ripe old age he stands vindicated and honored by his fellow-countrymen.

But whilst they were thus killing off Scott for the campaign of 1848, there was another old soldier then unhonored and unknown to fame, and of whom they had not thought, or no doubt he would have been tried by a drum-head court

martial for whipping this same General Santa Anna at Buena Vista, and suspended also from command; and in him they caught a tartar, they went out to shear, and came home shorn. General Taylor was selected as the candidate in opposition to General Cass, and although he was said to have been the owner of some two or three hundred slaves, he, too, in turn, was vehemently denounced as an abolitionist, not fit to be trusted by the South; nor is it probable he would have been trusted, but for the division of a portion of the northern Democracy in favor of Mr. Van Buren, who, to resent his defeat in the Convention of '44, had by this time made an exhibition of his "southern principles" not very much to the taste of his former admirers in the South, and ran as a Free-soil candidate. Here, then, all their issues had thus failed in 1848; the twenty-first rule, the cry of abolition, the annexation of Texas, the Mexican war, had all availed them nothing, and for the third time the "sceptre had departed from Judah." This they could no longer stand, and what was their next resort? Why nothing short of a dissolution of the Union and the organization of a Southern Confederacy, in which their title to power would be perpetual and omnipotent, and we poor devils of the Whig party were to be made the hewers of wood, and drawers of water for our hard task-masters, except on the condition of bending the knee to Baa!; this cry of disunion was hushed and trodden under foot by the happy influence of the compromises of 1850, which they sternly resisted to the end, and rather than submit to which, they called a convention at Nashville for the purpose of initiating a movement in favor of dissolution; that failing, and finding these measures were overwhelmingly popular with the people, they wheeled to the right about, claimed the compromises as their own sacred work, put up their candidate from New Hampshire on the platform of the compromise measures, swore he was a better southern man, and more to be relied on for his devotion and faithful adherence to those compromises as a final settlement of the question than General Scott, another native of Virginia, whom they denounced also as a radical abolitionist, and subject to the influence and control of abolitionists, and they carried every southern State against him except three—Maryland, Tennessee, and Kentucky.

It was by these means, and by a resort to such expedients, that they were enabled by making a foot-ball for party of the slavery issue, and turning it into a sectional party question to succeed at all—always expressing doubt and distrust of every southern man who did not agree with their general policy of government, and confiding in, trusting to, and coalescing with every man of the North, whose natural and educational instincts were opposed to slavery, if they would only do the one needful thing, and that was, to help them to money, place, and power.

Seeing the success with which this sectional pro-slavery party had played their game, by keeping the South generally united upon the slavery question as a political issue for retaining power, it was not unnatural that the northern politicians, having a large majority of the electoral vote in the northern States, and which had been steadily increasing, should have made a po-

litical hobby of the anti-slavery side of the question, and have used their exertions to unite the North in opposition to the extension of slavery; for the purpose of acquiring power. How far, or how soon they would have succeeded in obtaining an ascendancy over the southern Democracy is questionable—if Democracy had been gifted with common prudence or common honesty; but the supreme folly of that party in 1854, in order to make another new slavery issue for the election of 1856, in breaking down the Missouri compromise, in order to force slavery into territory devoted to freedom, and which had been hallowed by time and recognized by the whole country as a bargain and compact, sacred and inviolate as the Constitution itself, was the last grain that broke the camel's back; it aroused the indignation of the whole North; it opened their eyes to the aggressions of the Democratic party in the South; northern politicians seized upon the occasion, and using with adroitness the instruments thus placed in their hands, have at last succeeded in beating down southern Democracy with their own weapons, and at their own game; and thus the whole story respecting the slavery issue is plainly and fairly told. It has been used by both parties for political purposes; by one, for the purpose of retaining; the other, for acquiring money, place, and power; and whilst the leaders on both sides have excited their followers to a condition of unreasonable pretension and demand, they are sitting hob nob at Washington, dining, drinking wine, cracking nuts, and cracking jokes together, as familiarly and unconcerned, and as careless and indifferent about results growing out of the agitation they have created, beyond its immediate effect upon parties, as if never a slave had been heard of in the country. Thus has southern Democracy lost the game and the stakes played for; and now they call upon us, the conservative Whigs of the South, whom they have treated as worse than aliens, whose counsels they have spurned, whose fidelity they have derided, whose remonstrances against making a party and sectional issue of slavery they have contemned, whose patriotism they laughed at, and whose loyalty they have denounced; after all this, in the hour of their humility and defeat, they call upon us for aid, which, in the hour of their triumph and pride, they scoffed at and rejected with disdain; failing in which, they threaten to tear down the fairest fabric of Government ever erected by human hands. I can only say, if they get no aid, until they get it from me, their patience will be exhausted, unless they have an interminable supply; for doomsday might crack, and they would still be found without it. It has been under their control that the country has been brought to its present deplorable and disgraceful condition, in every aspect in which it can be viewed. They have shown themselves to be utterly unworthy and incompetent to manage the affairs of the nation, because each one has been managing for himself. Let them be set aside, and let some other party be called to the helm of State, and let them howl, and rave, and "tear their passions to tatters" at the loss of money, place, and power, which they have so long enjoyed and so wildly abused.

Is there any truth or sincerity in the declara-

tions made on the floor of Congress, and in the public presses, by the Democracy, that the institution of slavery is in danger? Let us look for one moment at their declarations and then at their actions, and every man *with brains or without them*, must at once become satisfied that it is the merest hypocrisy, trickery and jugglery for political effect, for *money, place, and power*, that was ever played off on the credulity of sensible men.

From the commencement of the present meeting of Congress, the loudest professions of devotion to the South and its institutions, have, as usual, been reiterated in our ears. The country has been notified that the election of Mr. Sherman would be the forerunner of the election of a Republican to the Presidency, and that such a result would not only be destructive of the Union, for which they profess no great concern, but *ruinous to slavery*, of which they assume exclusive guardianship. And, therefore, the preservation of the one, and the security of the other, depended on the defeat of the Republican candidate for Speaker; for the accomplishment of which, every obligation that could devolve upon a Southern Representative, required them to present an undivided front to that party whose success would bring so many untold woes upon the country, but especially on the South. This was their profession. What has been their practice? Why, when it was already demonstrated that no member of the Democratic party could bring to his aid outside influence enough, with the vote of the southern Opposition combined, to secure his election, but that on several different ballots it was in *their* power, by presenting this unbroken front, to elect either one of three conservative southern men, Gilmer, Boteler or Maynard, they quietly turned upon their heels and withheld their support—thus, in effect, declaring that to save the Union and to save the South, and its best interests, they would not vote for any other than a Democrat. *Democracy then, it is now confessed, is their one idea.* The security of slavery, and the success of Democracy, have not, by any means, for the first time, been, but are now, in the *most glaring and palpable* form, brought in collision. And what does this only "*National Party*," these peculiar and only friends to southern rights and southern institutions say? Why, in effect, they say, let the Union go to destruction, and slavery along with it, if to save either, or both, involves the defeat of Democracy or the loss of *money, place, and power.*

And it is upon this idea of protection to slavery that this same Democracy propose to adopt a system altogether unnecessary, injudicious, dangerous and expensive to our already over-taxed people. It is nothing less than a proposition to put the entire Commonwealth in a state of defence—to establish armories, manufacture implements of war, and to put arms in the hands of all the citizens of the State—arm the people! And for what, and against whom? Who are we going to fight? Do the authorities of this State contemplate sending an armed force into Pennsylvania, or Ohio, or through the territories of those States, to attack Beecher, Phillips, Cheever, Garrison and their associates? Or is it contemplated that they are coming here to attack us? Or is it from an apprehension of a

general, servile insurrection, when such gratifying evidence of the fidelity of the slaves around Harper's Ferry has just been furnished to our people? Half a million or a million of dollars to be laid out for defence, against wind-mills of crack-brained creation! Let it be done, and those who contribute towards it, will live to lament it, and wonder how they could have been so misled. Of one thing, all may be assured, and that is, that if ever another John Brown should make his appearance here, he will have no occasion for bringing his pikes along to arm the negroes—they will be abundantly supplied with arms—if they shall not, in the meantime, have been eaten up with rust. To encourage the organization of volunteer companies, who will have regular parades, and keep their arms, not only in safety, but in order, is but right, and all that is necessary and proper to be done.

But the question is often asked, is all this to lead to a dissolution of the Union? I answer no! He who threatens its destruction only exhibits himself as a rash, inconsiderate and thoughtless man, ignorant of the nature of our government, and incapable of comprehending the magnitude and the difficulties that surround the subject; he skims like a bird over the smooth surface of the lake where all is tranquil and placid, but never looks below at the rocks and reefs, and shoals and bars, that on every side threaten the safety of the mariner. This Union was not made to be dissolved. It was intended to be *perpetual*, and perpetual it will be. Because each day that it has existed from the hour of its birth, it has become more and more a necessity, that cannot be dispensed with. It has grown with its growth, and strengthened with its strength, until it has become a *fixture* permanent and enduring. Its founders wisely provided for its perpetuation—but as wisely omitted to provide for its destruction. A dissolution of this great and glorious and sacred Union! "*It is not so nominated in the bond.*"

Under the old articles of confederation it was provided in act 6th, that—

"No two or more States shall enter into any treaty, confederation or alliance whatever between them, without the consent of the Congress of the United States, in Congress assembled, specifying accurately the purpose for which the same is to be entered into, and how long it shall continue."

Again:

"Article 18th. Every State shall abide by the determinations of the United States, in Congress assembled, on all questions which, by this confederation, is submitted to them; and the articles of this confederation shall be inviolably observed by every State, and the *Union shall be perpetual.*"

And the concluding paragraph declares:

"And we do further solemnly plight and engage the faith of our respective constituents, that they shall abide by the determinations of the United States in Congress assembled, on all questions which, by the said confederation, are submitted to them. And that the articles thereof shall be inviolably observed by the States we respectively represent—and that the *Union shall be perpetual.*"

So that under the old Confederation, the Union was intended to be perpetual; and under the Constitution it is declared, that the object is to form "*a more perfect Union.*" and so they did, because under the articles of confederation, the existence of the Union depended on the plighted faith only of the parties—there was no power given to perpetuate itself—but under the "*more*

perfect Union" formed by the Constitution, this power is given—and can be counteracted only by revolution, which must be stronger than the government itself to be successful—the idea, then, of a peaceable dissolution, is as preposterous as to talk about dismembering a limb from the body, without mutilation, deformity, or pain. If there is no violation of the Constitution, you have no right to withdraw as a member of the body, because it cannot be done without mutilation, pain and danger to the other members of the body, even if your own condition *would be* benefited by the withdrawal; and if the Constitution is violated, other remedies than revolution or withdrawal are amply provided. If the United States was composed of one consolidated mass, as is England or France, it might by consent of parties be divided; but, being composed of thirty-three separate States, and each one having to act for itself, with their diversified views, interests, localities, political affinities, and habits of intercourse, it would be found utterly impracticable to carry it out. Suppose, by common consent, the vote should be submitted to each State to-morrow. Virginia votes to go out, Maryland, Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina and Texas vote to stay in, as they probably would; it would constitute a confederacy with boundaries even more awkward and inconvenient than some of our gerry-mandered Congressional districts. Texas in the Union with intermediate States out of it; Virginia out, and surrounded on every side by States that are in; what would be her condition? Would she constitute an isolated government, or would she be a part of a southern confederacy, cut off from all access and intercourse with her confederates? Then, again, the Democracy, and that is almost a synonyme for the South, claim the benefit of the Monroe doctrine, as it has been interpreted, that no European government shall be allowed to interfere with the affairs of this continent, and to avoid the proximity of a dangerous neighbor, they have already proposed to take possession of Cuba, by fair means, if they can, but by foul, if they must; would Virginia and the more southern States of the new Confederacy admit this doctrine as applicable to themselves? That those States voting to remain in the Union of which there would be a vast and overpowering majority, should take by fair means if they could, but by foul if necessary, their several Territories to avoid European interference and proximity, and hold them in a territorial condition until they were qualified to be admitted as *free States* into the Union, then, perhaps, embracing all of Canada? But we are daily told that the South is strong enough to take care of itself—and so it is, under the Constitution, and in the Union—but without the one, and out of the other—it is all moonshine—there is no reality in it; by the time the division would be brought about, if at all, their numbers would treble ours; and where is the power abroad, friendly to slavery that the South would look to for protection? All this bluster about the power of six millions, to cope with, and conquer from thirteen to fifteen millions may suit a debating society or Fourth of July display—but is very unprofitable elsewhere, and ought to be reserved for such occasions. Nobody believes it, and nobody believes the North is disposed to put it to the test—for

they are as much interested in maintaining the Union as we are—and it is said by the South to be far more so—and it is not a principle with the Yankees to make any trade that there is no money in, and don't pay. Then, again, upon what terms are we to divide? What portion of the army and navy, of the public treasury, public lands, public property of all descriptions, arsenals, forts, docks, fortifications, navy yards, is to be allotted to each?

As to the natural man, we are told, "we brought nothing into this world, so it is certain we can carry nothing out"—but the seceding States have brought a great deal into the public treasury; are we to take nothing out? and if yea, what and how? and if nay, are we to go out bare-headed, bare-footed, and bare backed, leaving all the property, treasury, and sinews of war in the hands of our deadliest enemies, as they would soon become. And I pray to know what evil could be cured out of the Union that cannot be ten-fold more readily cured in the Union.

Somebody has asked, how are you going to divide the 4th of July, Yorktown, and Bunker Hill?—but I will ask a more practical question. How are you going to dispose of the Mississippi river? Louisiana and Mississippi vote to go out; Tennessee, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, Iowa, Michigan, Wisconsin, &c., choose to stay in; the mouth of the Mississippi has been bought and paid for, out of the common purse, for the benefit of the whole; how is it to be disposed of, and who is to control it? Again: Would the South be prepared to recognize the right of the State of Ohio, occupying nearly the centre of the Union, to secede, and establish her independence in our midst, and with open arms to receive all fugitive slaves, as they are now received in Canada, with no treaty or other obligations resting upon her, to surrender them? Suppose Texas should become settled by a foreign population, and should exclude slavery from its limits, would the South recognize her right, peaceably, to withdraw from the Union with no obligation to surrender fugitives? Would New Jersey be permitted, peaceably, to retire from the Union, and cut off all connection, intercourse and travel through her territory, either in peace or war? If we were to purchase Cuba at \$200,000,000, and admit her as a State, would her right be acknowledged, the day after she was paid for and admitted as a sovereign State, peaceably to withdraw, declare her independence, and annex herself again to Spain? Let this doctrine be fully established, and I imagine all serious impediments to the purchase will be speedily removed—and Mr. Buchan may yet close his administration in a blaze of glory for having acquired what has been so long coveted by many of our people. Is it treason to the South to call their attention to these latter views? But I tire of enumerating difficulties, of which I have scarcely made a beginning. As I said, the union of these States has become an absolute NECESSITY, not only for ourselves, but as one of the great powers of the world, to preserve the equilibrium of nations—to furnish a home for the oppressed of all the world, to enjoy the benefits of our institutions, and the protection of our laws, *but not to make them*. Blot out the United States from the map of nations to-morrow, and in twen-

ty years the world would exhibit one universal scene of absolute despotism. The Almighty does not will this to be, and it will not be. The Union ain't going to be dissolved, "and there's an end on't."

The population of the United States is from 25 to 30,000,000; the Abolition party may be estimated at from 100 to 150,000; and now the question is, shall we surrender this magnificent Empire to them, and throw away the great results of all the toil, sufferings, and dangers that our fathers endured—more for us than themselves—and thereby enable them to abolish the rest of the North, as would be done, if all constitutional restrictions should be thrown off; or to remain in, and by the power of the Constitution control the whole, and obtain what we are entitled to—full, fair, equal justice to all. Can sensible men hesitate which of the two to choose?

There is certainly a very unfortunate state of excitement in the country and in Congress, which is much to be deplored. It will be kept up until after the election in November next, and then it will subside; Congress and the country will then resume its usual tone, and the Union will be left ten times stronger than it was the day it was formed. For one, I claim to be an American citizen, and I mean to remain one—there are not Democrats enough alive to deprive me of that great birthright whilst I live—and where the stars and stripes float, there will I be found; and no such party as the Democracy can carry me along with them out of this Union, even if they had found a way to get out themselves. If they wish to go, let them go, individually or collectively as they prefer, but I beg them to leave the State, and leave me behind. I incline to think the country and the State could spare them all that want to go, without very serious loss.

There are some who seem to think the Union would be dissolved, if the Democratic representatives of the Southern States were to leave Congress in a body and return home. (Nobody suspects the Opposition of such folly.) First of all, they are going to do no such thing. It would be a God's blessing if many of them would, and let better men take their places; but if they were, a quorum would still be left for all useful and legislative purposes. If the whole body should break up *in a row*, it would not effect the Union. Congress has broken up every year from 1789 down to 1859—sometimes in a good humor, and sometimes in a bad one, but it matters little which, as far as the Union is concerned. Neither the Democracy nor Congress had much to do with making the Union, and neither will be able to dissolve it. The power that created, is the power to destroy; and that was not Congress. The Democracy were never the friends of the Constitution—they were originally opposed to its adoption, and to this day, as a term of reproach, have habitually denounced us, who have been its friends and supporters as Federalists, because it was the Federal party, headed by such men as Washington, Madison, Hamilton, and Marshall, that carried it through triumphantly, against the most strenuous efforts of the Democratic or Republican party, as it was then called.

In the case of *Cohen vs. the State of Virginia*, before the Supreme Court of the United States,

Chief Justice Marshall, than whom, a purer or more able judge or better man, has never adorned the bench in any age or country, said:—

"It is true, if all the States or a majority of them refuse to elect Senators, the legislative powers of the Government will be suspended. But if any one State shall refuse to elect them, the Senate will not on that account be the less capable of performing all its functions. The argument founded on this fact would seem rather to prove the subordination of their parts to the whole than the complete independence of any one of them. The framers of the Constitution were, indeed, unable to make any provisions which should protect that instrument against a general combination of the States, or of the people, for its destruction, and conscious of this inability they have not made the attempt. But they were able to provide against the operations of measures adopted by any one State, whose tendency might be to arrest the execution of these laws, and thus it was the part of true wisdom to attempt it. *We think they have attempted it.*"

And so think the people; and the Democracy can come home as soon as they choose—but they are about as likely to do that as they are to dissolve the Union, for that would be a surrender of *Money, Place, and Power*, and when you catch them at that, you may "catch a weazel asleep," or a hen with teeth.

It is true, that many violent and improper things have been said and done at the North, and we have an especial right to complain of those States that have adopted legislative enactments for defeating or nullifying the fugitive slave law; even if some of its provisions are objectionable to them, that is not their remedy, and they have no right to resort to it; but are not violent and intemperate things said and done here, also, of which they may complain? Look at the advertisement which follows, and which I cut from a northern paper:

"We find the following specimen of advertising literature in the Richmond (Va.) paper:"

"\$100,000 REWARD.—MENSERS. EDITORS.—I will be one of one hundred gentlemen who will give twenty-five dollars each for the heads of the following traitors:

"Henry Wilson, Massachusetts; Charles Sumner, Massachusetts; Horace Greeley, New York; John P. Hale, New Hampshire; Wendell Phillips, Henry Ward Beecher, Brooklyn; Rev. Dr. Cheever, New York; Rev. Mr. Wheeler, New Hampshire; Schuyler Colfax, Anson Burlingame, Owen Lovejoy, Amos P. Granger, Edwin B. Morgan, Galusha A. Grow, Joshua R. Giddings, Edward Wade, Calvin C. Chaffee, William H. Kelsey, William A. Howard, Henry Walden, John Sherman, George W. Palmer, Daniel W. Gooch, Henry L. Dawes, Justin S. Morrill, I. Washburn, Jr., J. A. Bingham, Wm. Kellogg, E. B. Washburn, Benj. Stanton, Edward Dodd, C. B. Tompkins, John Covode, Cad. C. Washburne, Samuel G. Andrews, A. B. Olin, Sidney Dean, Nathaniel B. Durfee, Emory B. Pottle, DeWitt O. Leach, J. F. Potter, T. Davis, Massachusetts; T. Davis, Iowa; J. O. Fansworth, C. L. Knapp, R. E. Fenton, Philemon Bliss, Mason W. Tappan, Chas. Case, James Pipe, Homer E. Boyce, Isaac B. Clawson, A. S. Murray, Robert B. Hall, Valentine B. Horton, Freeman H. Morse, David Kilgore, Wm. Stewart, Samuel B. Curtis, John M. Wood, John M. Parker, Stephen C. Foster, Chas. J. Gilman, Chas. B. Hoard, John Thompson, J. W. Sherman, Wm. D. Braxton, Jas. Buffington, G. B. Matteson, Richard Mott, George K. Robbins, Ezekiel P. Walten, James Wilson, S. A. Purviance, Francis E. Spinner, Silas M. Burroughs. And I will also be one of one hundred to pay five hundred dollars each (\$50,000) for the head of *William H. Seward*, and would add a similar reward for Fred. Douglass; but regarding him, head and shoulders above these traitors, will permit him to remain where he now is."

"RICHMOND."

I need not be told that this was intended as a piece of badinage and a joke; for, we here all know, that no earnest reward of \$50,000 for a midnight assassination could have found its way into any respectable paper at the South, for that would have been as bad as old John Brown's

midnight assassinations at Harper's Ferry; but that is not the thing. It is published here, copied there, seized upon by the agitators, read to an excited multitude, probably to the friends of the individual for whose head the reward is offered; they take it all in good sober earnest, as indicative of southern feeling. They, in turn, indulge in all sorts of venom and vituperation; they pour out their vilest Billingsgate against the South. That is published there, sent on here, and circulated among our people as the general sentiment of the North; and, in this way, agitators there, and agitators here, keep the country in a continual ferment for their amusement, or to advance their own political fortunes.

But other things have also been done here, of which just complaint may be made; quiet, orderly, peaceable citizens of the free States, (if the newspapers are to be relied on,) men of business habits and character, travelling on the public highway, or sojourning in southern cities, have been arrested and put under guard, or turned back and advised to get home with all possible dispatch, for fear of a coat of tar and feathers. We are told that fifty such men lately had to leave the southern States for their own homes, not because they had violated any law, or done anything that was wrong, but because they were from the North, thus leaving their business neglected, and their rights of citizenship unprotected. Let us bring this thing home to ourselves, and see how it would work. Suppose a system of retaliation should be resorted to, and a body of southern merchants, or persons in search of health or pleasure, travelling through Pennsylvania, New York, or New England, were stopped, arrested, or turned back, only because they were from the South, what would be thought of it here, and to what consequences would it lead? I must say that, if such an unlawful exercise of despotic power is permitted to continue, it would be time to dissolve the Union; for, the government that does not protect its unoffending citizens at home, is worse than no government at all. I claim for every citizen in the land the clear and indisputable right to travel and remain where, and as long as he likes, provided he behaves himself and violates none of the obligations of a good citizen. If a naturalized Frenchman is entitled to the protection of the United States Government in France, and if an Austrian in Vienna, or a Prussian in Berlin, certainly a citizen of New York or New England is equally entitled to protection in Virginia, Georgia, or Louisiana. Nor does this sacred and inalienable right of citizenship, at all interfere with a proper and rigid exercise of vigilance being kept upon persons of doubtful or suspicious character, upon itinerant vagrants and strolling vagabonds, travelling through the country without ostensible or lawful pursuits, and if caught in any violation of law, to subject them to the penalties of the law; but I will not consent that I shall be liable to arrest, or denied the privilege of travelling through any State in this Union, because I am a Virginian or a slaveholder, or that others shall be subject to the same violence and wrong, because they were from one of the free States.

What, then, is the doctrine of civil liberty, and the rights of citizenship, as established by modern southern Democracy? I am arrested in

New England; because I am from a slave State, and a slaveholder. Naturalized Hansberger is arrested in Berlin, because he is a native of Prussia. We both appeal to the United States Government for protection—he is entitled to it, and I am not. Is that it—to all practical effect it is. We must go to war for Hansberger, but I am to be left to take care of myself, and get out of the clutches of a vigilant committee to avoid tar and feathers as I can. So say those who have exercised this power here. Oh, Democracy! oh, consistency! thou art jewels of priceless value.

Our friends must be pleased to see the efforts to induce the South to go to work and manufacture for itself. It has been too long dependent for almost every household comfort and convenience on the labor of others, from a corn-broom and water-bucket, to the richest and most costly article of daily necessity in our families. It is a policy that for five and twenty years we have never ceased to urge upon them—encouragement to home enterprise and home industry, which has always been met with the cry of "free trade," and "buy where you can buy cheapest." My only regret is, that the effort does not arise from a sound conviction of its eminent propriety, which would make it a permanent policy, rather than from a spirit of hostility and retaliation, which will I fear render it temporary and unavailing; and if it is the true policy of the South, (as all seem now willing to admit,) to encourage and protect the labor and enterprise of our own people, in preference to that of sister States, how vastly more important is it that the nation should adopt the same policy, and protect the industry and energies of the people, rather than that of foreign governments! or will those who urge the necessity of rendering the South independent of the North, contend for the absurdity that it is desirable, or expedient, or wise, that both North or South shall continue their dependence on the people, or the labor of Europe! It appears to me that the "Southern Rights Associations" of the South, composed almost exclusively of those who have been most clamorous for "free trade, and buy where you can buy cheapest," have surrendered the whole question, and forever closed their lips against the policy of protection; provided they are actuated by any consistency of principle, or provided they profess to consult the interests of the whole, as they do that of a section, or unless they contend that the Constitution was made for a section, and not for the whole.

And now, the main and important question arises, is there no basis for the permanent adjustment of this agonizing question? To my mind it appears there is.

We must get back to the original purposes of the Constitution, and to the evident design of the great framers of that sacred instrument. It must be understood between the North and the South, that we will let each other alone—that they shall attend to their business, and we will attend to ours—that they are in no manner responsible for the existence of slavery in the South, and have no right to meddle with it, in any manner, form or shape, except so far as the duty devolves upon them, to see that there is no interruption to the execution of the law for the surrender of runaway slaves; if there are any ob-

noxious features of that law, of which they may justly complain, let them be so far modified as will not interfere with a proper and fair execution of its legitimate objects. There are national and conservative men enough in the North to guarantee all this, if they will exercise their energies for its accomplishment.

On the other hand, we must be content to live as our fathers lived for two hundred years prior to 1854, satisfied with the institutions secured to us where it exists by law and is recognized by the Constitution; and we must resist all efforts of extreme men (upon whom the question of slavery has ostensibly operated like the nightmare, disturbing their thoughts by day and their dreams by night) to coerce the institution of slavery into territory now free against the will of the people inhabiting the territory, either by national legislation or by force of arms. The power is not given, and was not intended to be given, by those who framed our government, or they would not themselves have imposed a positive prohibition on its introduction into all the territory then subject to their jurisdiction and control. Especially should we, the minority in the South, who have been crushed to the earth by the iron heel of Democracy, be reconciled to this, when we have daily evidence presented to our view, that the sole object of these ultra gentlemen is to strengthen their own hands, irrespective of the true interests or wishes of those who own the slaves, that they may continue to enjoy at our expense, money, place, and power. We must insist and demand that the Democracy shall no longer use this question for their selfish and unhallowed purposes, and the conservative men of the North must make the same demand upon the politicians of their section of the country. The wild fanaticism of madmen who preach in their churches—and only preach—can do us no harm.

Senator Mason has recently, as one of the representatives of that party, for himself and those whom he represents upon the floor of the Senate, in his official character made a most important and fatal admission to his and their claims on this point, and it is the more fatal because its truth will be everywhere recognized. He says "that the opinion of Virginia (he might have said the South) is different now from that of those distinguished men who are now gone, but whom we believe, had they lived till to-day, would have agreed with us."

But unfortunately for Mr. Mason and the school of "night-mare" politicians that he represents, the opinion of the majority of the country has not kept pace with the changes in Virginia, and in the South, except it may have been in an opposite direction; unfortunately for Mr. Mason and his friends, who find they can retain the money, place, and power of the country in their own hands by no other means—the Constitution has not changed with the change of opinions of Virginia or the South; unfortunately for them, the Constitution was made seventy odd years ago, when the present opinion of the fire-eaters of the South did not prevail among "the distinguished men who are now gone," and that consequently they did not think to provide for the change of opinion that has since taken place, and that they did not then anticipate.

May we not then be satisfied to take the constitution as we find it, and not as we might make it—if it were to be made over again and left to us to make it as we would like it? May we not be satisfied to let slavery stand unmolested, undisturbed, secure where it is, and to let others elsewhere adopt it or reject it as they choose, without further legislation on the subject, and without further effort to force it upon those who do not want it? Upon this basis, we can stand, fortified by the Constitution, fortified by law, fortified by our consciousness of right, fortified by the conservatism and good sense of the whole country, and fortified, justified, and ratified; I will venture to say, by the voice of nineteen twentieth of the slaveholding population of the South, if the question could be submitted to them alone for decision.

Upon this basis, the country can be restored to a sound, healthy, and harmonious condition; the important business of the country can be carried on without interruption; the interest of the white race can be substituted for that of the black, and the character of our Government can be elevated to its original high position, a slight point beyond the lame and impotent thing it has come to be, under the grasping, aggressive, but ruinous legislation and control of that party whose only hope and ambition seems to have been, as indicated by one of its chiefs when he said five and twenty years ago—"It was held together only by the cohesive power of the public plunder;" which meant that it was held together only so long as they could retain in their hands, the Money, Place, and Power of the country.

One word in regard to my past position and present attitude, and I have done. In 1854, while the Kansas Nebraska bill was pending before the Senate of the United States, I ventured to make an appeal to my fellow-countrymen of the South, and to implore them to reflect upon and forbear from the adoption of a measure which was the real foundation of all our present troubles—for everything was quieting down day by day under the happy influence of the compromises of 1850, and for want of fuel the last abolition spark would have been long since extinguished, but for this disturbing cause on the part of the Democracy to get up a new slavery issue for the Presidential election in 1856.

In the appeal I then made, I said in regard to the Missouri Compromise:

"As a Southern man I raise my voice against it. I oppose it because it involves a breach of faith on the part of the South who have for thirty odd years enjoyed the advantages obtained by them in the formation and admission of the States of Missouri and Arkansas. I oppose it because it necessarily and unavoidably begets another angry sectional controversy, which there are none left among us strong enough in the confidence of the people to allay. I oppose it, because it uproots and destroys the compromise measures of 1850, to which the North is no more pledged, than the South to the compromise now proposed to be abrogated. I oppose it, because it would be an act of infatuated madness on the part of the South to accept it. I oppose it, because it will be impossible ever again to obtain as favorable terms from the North with their seven millions majority of white population, as we obtained, when that population more nearly approximated equality. I oppose it, on the ground that it places a barren privilege, in the hands of the South, for which not only no equivalent is offered, but by which she must be an ultimate and great loser. I oppose it, because I do not like the source from which it comes, nor the power by which it is represented. 'Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.' It is proposed by a

Northern aspirant for the Presidency, and is supported by a Northern administration, surrounded by the enemies of peace, harmony, and union, whose free-soil proclivities have been manifested from the first moment they set their feet upon the pedestal of power: I oppose it, because I see Tammany Hall, free-soil, and adamant political associations, and committees uniting in its support.

"By almost superhuman efforts, such as went far to carry the most distinguished man of the age to his grave, we have just extinguished a conflagration that threatened the destruction of the noblest ship of State that was ever launched upon the waters, and we have scarcely had time to realize the result, and exchange congratulations on our safety, when once more rash and wild and frantic than the rest, setting a blazing torch in each hand, rushes madly into the magazine of powder, nourishes his firebrands aloft, and, bidding defiance to all consequences, calls upon us to imitate his example. Those may follow him who choose; but for my own part, on all such occasions, I prefer the hose to the flambeau. I beg the South to listen and reflect whilst yet the opportunity is offered.

"I know that the champions of slavery in the South have made every concession to free-soilism since it came in conflict with Mr. Pierce and the spoils. * * * But let them not venture to sacrifice the sacred and solemnly secured rights of the South, to promote the ambitious designs of selfish aspirants to power not yet, with the vain hope of building up the fallen fortunes of their party.

"As a *son-of-a-man* man, and as a national man, I should like to see this misshapen and ill-begotten monster killed. I should rejoice to see this Pandora's box of evils forever buried, and I would resort to any fair and legitimate means to accomplish so desirable an end; and as I stand in the presence of my Maker, I will do what I can to defeat it; and I say to my friends in the South particularly, and to the people of the country everywhere, that their cry should be, 'Let the demon of discord be strangled in its birth! Let it have no resting place for its disturbed repose! Let it be hooted, scouted, and driven from door to door, like a worthless, penniless, beggarly thief! Let no man give it a shelter from the pitiless storm! Let it die and rot upon the dunghill! Let every lover of his country, and of its peace, and harmony, and good will, and honor, and good faith, and durability, turn from it with loathsome and shuddering disgust, as they would avoid a pestilence or a plague! Let him treat it as a disturber of his country's peace, honor, welfare, and perpetuity!'

"The South professes to despise Mr. Seward as its worst enemy. I tell the South, that every man who helps to destroy the compromise of 1820, is unwittingly engaged in the service of Mr. Seward. He is uniting the North as one man, on a sectional issue, in which their pride and principle is as much involved as ours, and which will throw them all into the ranks of Mr. Seward. You will have no more National Whiggery; no more National Democracy; no more 'hard-shells,' nor 'hunkers,' nor 'adamantines.' You make them all free-soilers, soft-shells, and barn-burners; and he who cannot see the dark spirit of disunion lurking around this bill, is not a far-sighted man. In my opinion, no sectional strife we have ever had, will begin to compare with it either in intensity or duration."

For the utterance of these sentiments, at that time, I was not only vigorously assailed by the whole southern press, but the opprobrious epithets of "traitor," "demagogue," "trafficker with principles," &c., were freely applied to me. How far my predictions have been verified by the results, I leave to others to determine. But if I was not mistaken then, when standing alone, as I was at that day, one man against the whole South, may I not claim without an imputation of vanity or egotism, that my counsels are now entitled to the consideration of those with whom I am politically associated, and to whom I would address this single remark?

I said "all those who helped to destroy the Missouri Compromise were unwittingly engaged in the service of Mr. Seward." So, I say, now, that every man who lends his aid, or his countenance to the ill-timed and unnecessary artificial excitement that has been manufactured for a purpose, is either wittingly or unwittingly en-

gaged in the service of the Democratic party; and, if in the Opposition, is, whether wittingly or unwittingly, surely and beyond all doubt, engaged in forging the political manacles, which will be fastened on his own limbs, and which he will be made to endure, when through such instrumentality he has helped the Democracy to retain the *Money, Place, and Power* of the country in their own unworthy hands.

I shall not imitate the common example of making vain and idle boasts of my patriotism and loyalty to the South. I hope I am loyal to the Constitution; and, if I am, I must recognize alike the rights of all—but God knows, and I know, that if ever an important right or interest of this State is assailed—most of the noisy boasters of their devotion will be found leagues behind me in rushing to its defence. And if I should ever abandon or sacrifice any constitutional right of this State that she chooses to contend for, let me be treated as a traitor to, and deserter from, the obligations and duties I owe to my nativity, to my friends, to my home, and to my children. I have had too much to say against traitors ever to become one myself, but I ask to be judged by results, and not by passionate excitement. If I were not proclaimed an Abolitionist by the Democracy, I should feel that they did not consider me of sufficient consequence to be assailed.

This, then, is the light in which I view the scenes of recent occurrence. These are the opinions I entertain of the condition of the country, its past, its present, and its future. These are my conclusions in regard to our sacred and indestructible Union; and this is my knowledge of the history of the Democratic party, derived from a long and intimate acquaintance, and close observation of their workings and designs. God grant that they may be fairly received and justly weighed; and if they should have the effect of bringing our people to calm and considerate reflection of what is due to themselves, to truth, and to their country—if they shall tend towards tranquilizing the public mind, and restoring a better, and a kinder feeling between the different sections of a country, whose *interests, welfare, and safety*, are all inseparably connected, I shall have attained an object that is nearer and dearer to my heart than any personal preferment or earthly honor that could be bestowed. I had rather be regarded as a "Pacifist," who had tranquilized the public mind, and restored harmony to the distracted sections of the country, than to be the President of the United States—which is no bed of roses, and which gratifies no other passion than that of ambition, and can lead to the personal happiness of none.

Permit me, gentlemen, to return you my profound acknowledgements for the high honor you have done me, in attaching so much importance to my opinions, as well as for the highly complimentary terms in which you have called for them.

I am, with very sincere respect, and esteem,
Your obedient servant,

JOHN M. BOTTS.

To Messrs. RIVES, CARTER, TOWNS, &c., &c.